



DHEC's Office of Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling

For Your Information...

Conserving Energy

What is energy?

Energy is what makes things work. We use energy when we turn on a light switch, drive a car, bake a cake, listen to a CD, watch television, use a computer and run the dishwasher. Energy makes our lives comfortable.

Where does energy come from?

A major source of energy is the sun. The sun's light and heat are both forms of energy. Plants use the sun's energy to grow. When we eat plants, we take their energy. This gives us the energy to grow, think and learn. Other sources of energy are coal, petroleum, natural gas, wood and the wind.

Another form of energy is nuclear energy. South Carolina relies on nuclear energy more than many other states. About 30 percent of our overall energy consumption is nuclear energy – compared to about 7 percent average per state nationally, according to the S.C. Energy Office. About 57 percent of the electricity generated in the state is from nuclear energy – compared to about 21 percent average per state nationally. Here's a number for you: in 1997, South Carolina used 477 trillion BTUs of nuclear energy.

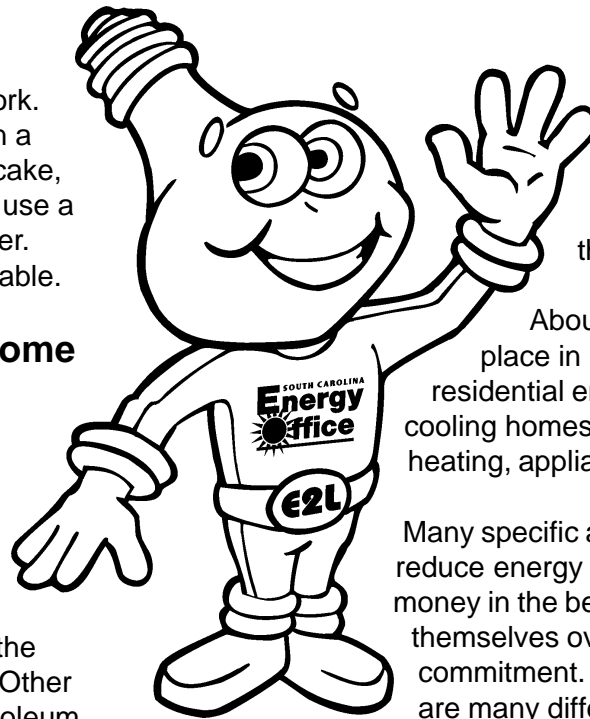
Why does South Carolina rely on nuclear energy more than other states? South Carolina doesn't have many natural energy resources. The gasoline and other fossil fuels that we use have to be imported from other states and countries. The importing of this energy is very expensive. That's one of the reasons that we have to be energy smart – that is, use energy wisely and conserve where we can.

Working Together to Conserve

Each of us has a role to play in promoting energy efficiency. If we work together, we can prolong the life of our energy resources.

About one-fifth of all energy use takes place in homes. In South Carolina, most residential energy use goes to heating and cooling homes. This is followed by water heating, appliance use and lighting.

Many specific activities have been identified to reduce energy use. Some of these cost more money in the beginning but will generally pay for themselves over time. All of them involve a commitment. Listed on the back of this sheet are many different ways we can all help conserve energy.



Heating and Cooling Conservation

- Adjust your thermostat. Use lower temperatures in winter and higher temperatures in summer.
- Dress appropriately. Wear loose fitting clothes in summer and layers in winter.
- In the winter, leave shades, blinds and curtains open on sunny days so you can use the sun's heat. Close them on cloudy days to prevent heat loss. Reverse the process in the summer.
- Use ceiling fans. In the winter, run them in reverse to circulate warm air. In summer, run them to create a breeze.
- Use storm doors and windows. Make sure they are fastened tightly and doors are closed properly.

Water Heating Conservation

- Use hot water wisely. Don't use hot water if lukewarm will do.
- Try to take a shower instead of a bath. Showers usually use less hot water.

Appliance Conservation

- Use a toaster oven or microwave instead of an electric oven.
- Always wait until you have a full load to run the dishwasher, washer or dryer.
- Turn off the TV or radio when not in use.

Lighting Conservation

- Use lower watt bulbs in stairwells, closets and areas where you don't need to read.
- Use compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs). These bulbs are relatively expensive to buy, but are long-lasting and extremely economical in the long run. They last up to 10 times longer, use one fourth the energy and produce 90 percent less heat and produce more light.

Transportation

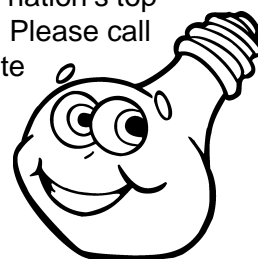
- Carpool. Increase the number of people riding in a car at one time to work, school functions, sports events and parties
- Ride the bus. People who ride buses, subways and trains save energy by leaving their cars at home. You could even walk or bike to nearby places.

School Conservation

- Turn off lights when leaving room for recess, during special assemblies or when the class is on a field trip.
- If your school doesn't already have a recycling program, you can help start one. Recycling is an easy way to save energy and protect the environment.
- Make sure drapes or shades are closed at night to insulate the classroom.

'Energy 2 Learn'

"Energy 2 Learn" is a comprehensive energy education program for South Carolina's students and teachers. It includes classroom lessons, an awards program and other materials including "The Energy Factbook: A Resource for South Carolina" and "The Science Fair Project Guidebook: A Resource for Students and Parents." All program materials are available at no cost to teachers, schools or students. Teachers are welcomed and encouraged to use any or all of the programs offered. "Energy 2 Learn" offers balanced, objective and multi-sided information and materials, providing South Carolina's teachers and students with one of the nation's top energy education programs. Please call DHEC's Office of Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling at **1-800-768-7348** or visit our Web site at **www.scdhec.net/recycle** for more information.



DHEC's Office of Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling FYIs provide general information on environmental topics. Readers are encouraged to reproduce this material. For more information about solid waste issues, please call **1-800-768-7348** or visit our Web site at **www.scdhec.net/recycle**. Please send written correspondence to: DHEC's Office of Solid Waste Reduction and Recycling, 2600 Bull Street, Columbia, SC 29201.